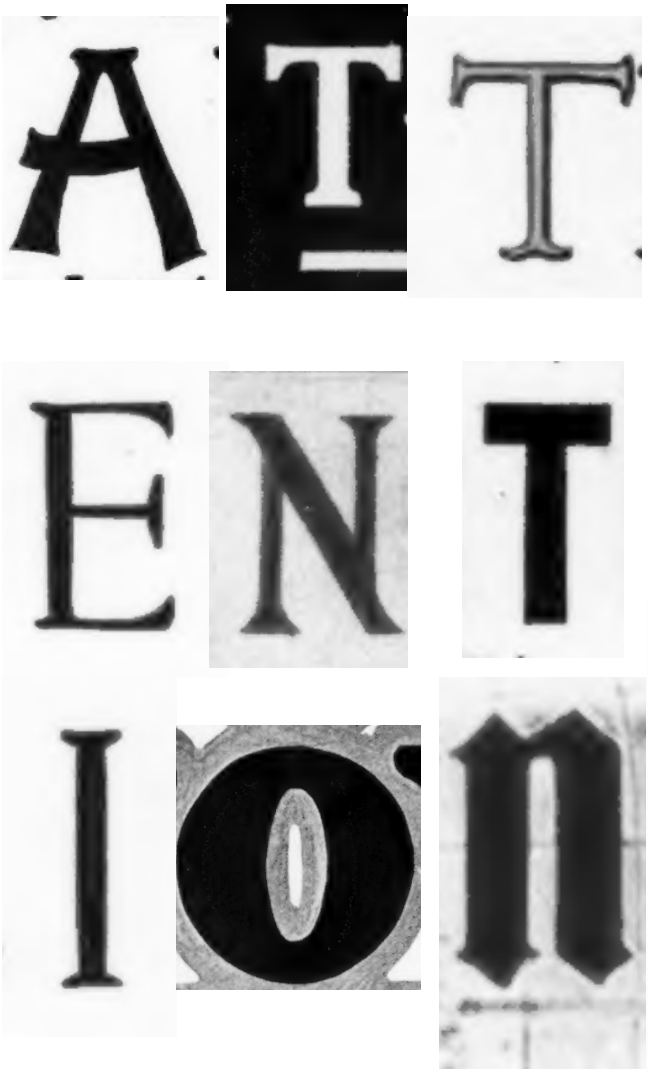

ATTENTION!

lora wanta

art_irl [5] **summer /**

“attention” **9.13.2025**

g cullen

m eppes

y fahmy

j kocsis

k mackenzie

a maldonado [p. 17]

t simpson

l wanta [p. 1]

8:02

VANITY FAIR SUBSCRIBE

On X last month, **Sam Altman** announced one of OpenAI's recent ventures: His team had trained a new model that was "good at creative writing" and "got the vibe of metafiction so right." In response to Altman's prompt, "Please write a metafictional literary short story about AI and grief," the algorithm output 1,100 words of purple prose ("she lost him on a Thursday—that liminal day that tastes of almost-Friday") told by an LLM. In one line, the narrator describes AI as "a democracy of ghosts"—the story's best phrase. An avid reader might recognize it from Nabokov's grief-ridden and oh-so-human 1957 novel, *Pnin*.

Watch: Entire Thing Flips Over

spicuous civilian. Only very few disciples come to the end of the road, which doesn't matter, for the monastery is not a school intended to produce nothing but masters. Everybody is required to do what he can, and the teacher helps, quietly, often passively, sometimes by force. If you do anything at all, do it well. Don't look at the result. The result is important, did you say? Don't talk nonsense.

Un Pájaro

TORI SIMPSON

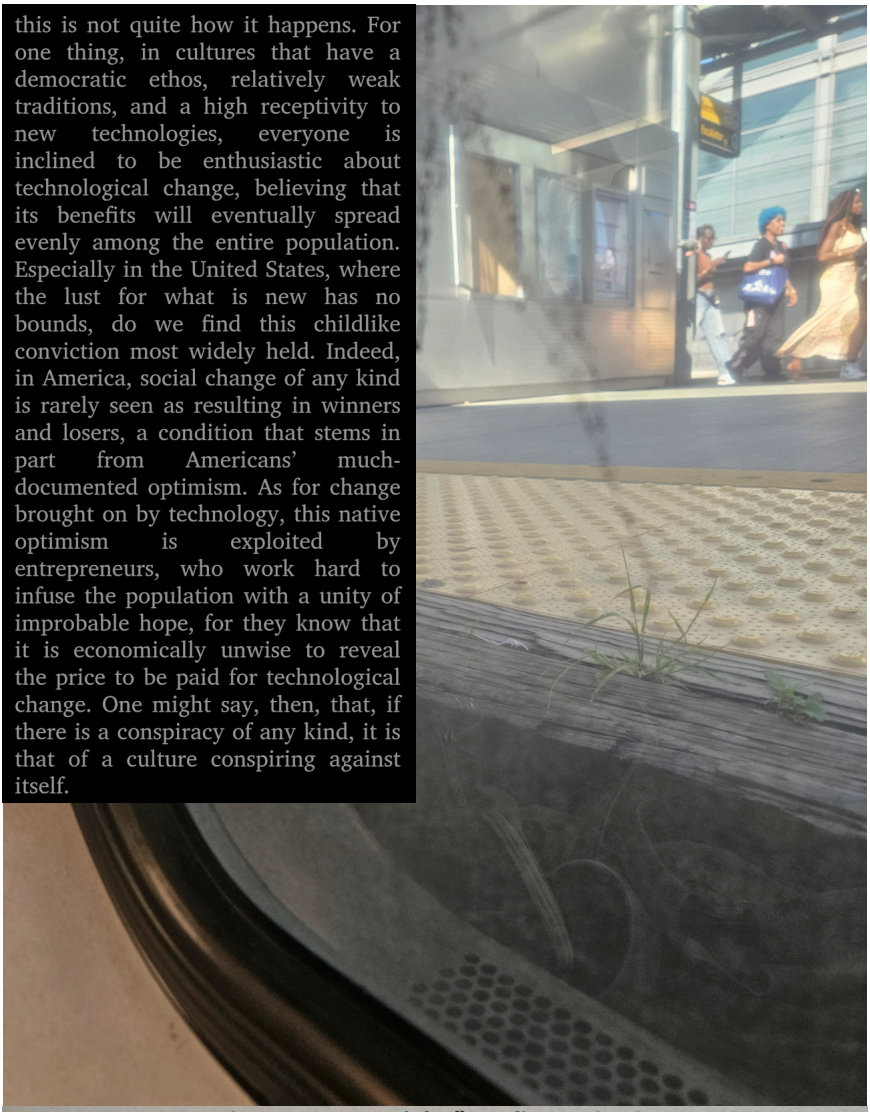
There is a bird on my windowsill; it flies away. I'm staring out at a tree and trying not to think of other things. Nothing is ever undivided anymore, especially not my attention. There's a bird in the tree now but I don't know if it's the same one. I hope it is. It would be nice if this tree was its home. Then we'd be neighbors. But I'm moving soon—let's not think about that right now. The bird's head is swiveling left and right, taking the world in. This morning, the sunlight is gentle and so is the breeze. I hold the transparent white curtains aside as I stare outward. I wonder if this morning seems gentle to the bird as well. Though "gentle" is relative, and I find it harder every moment, it seems, to find gentleness. Now that word is stuck in my brain, and I start to spell it out over and over but I want to focus on the bird, the tree! The bird is gone now; the tree isn't—now *that* would be something. If I lived in an epic fantasy, maybe this would be one small, insignificant stop on the tree's journey elsewhere. How wonderful that would be. If trees danced, or spoke. They'd have a lot to say I'm sure. Squirrels! Two of them chase each other up the trunk. Despite years without using it, I've never forgotten the word for squirrel in Spanish: ardilla. Las ardillas son muy rápidas. ¡Qué lindas! Trataré de pensar sobre este árbol en español. Quiero practicar más la lengua hermosa. Pero es difícil, porque es una cosa más que hacer. Tengo basta que hacer. El mundo es muy grande y hay muchas posibilidades—quiero hacer, aprender, y ver todo. Pero no puedo, no debo. De regreso al árbol.

Leo un libro en español. Trato mucho de aprender las palabras mientras las leo. Tengo que usar un translator en mi phone con frecuencia. Mientras reviso mi phone, recuerdo que necesito check el clima para mañana. Hay un evento en el parque; ¿qué debería vestir? Ah! Debo leer. Estoy tratando a apreciar el libro, pero estoy esforzando tanto a mi cerebro que no puedo apreciar más que las definiciones. Digo, yo sé que se trata el libro, pero no puedo disfrutar los detalles e imágenes mientras tengo que traducir cada otra palabra. Esta página es dog-eared. I smooth it out. Now I notice all the other signs of wear on this used book. Tengo que arreglar todos los dog-ears y small tears. Smooth them all out. Al menos no hay marcas del lápiz ni de la pluma. Me gusta imaginar how many people read this book antes que yo. Busco nombres escritos a mano en el libro. No hay ninguno. Oh, pues. Leo el libro.

It would be nice to just think about this one thing. It's early in the morning—my favorite time of day—and I'm stretching before a run. I make my breathing intentional and in rhythm with my movements. How long should I run today? How much time do I have before my other to-dos? What *do* I have going on today? (As if I don't know my schedule to a tee already, but repeating it in my head as if it's all that's tethering me to the ground is kind of my thing). Yeah, let's go over it all again, just in case. No! Stretch, breathe, feel the muscles and sore spots. Smile, appreciate. I do feel strong. But what should I listen to while running that will motivate me the most? I want to break my personal record today. I'm kind of getting tired of my usual workout playlist. I still have months before my big race, I have time to perfect the playlist. But I'm still so far from my goals, and not just my running ones. Ha! Not the time. Just stretch and breathe. Stretch and breathe.

The dishwasher is running and the fan is blowing. Is that what I'm supposed to be noticing right now? What's worthy of my attention? What's the most beneficial thing to tune into? I'm writing, and when I need a second to think I look out the window (a favorite pastime of mine). Because to look at my phone would be to give in to a negative thing to pay attention to, right? But I'm typing on a laptop, which is just another screen… I'm assigning value to things that depend wholly on context and intention. Or, maybe I'm trying to assign value to something that shouldn't, or doesn't, require it. Regardless, right now I choose to enjoy the sound of the keyboard clacking, see the words appear before me, and appreciate that I'm even pondering a subject so rife yet so broken and interrupted. "Attention"—or even moreso, "Atención"—rolls off the tongue nicely, but that's where my certainty about the word, the concept, the practice ends. Something flickers at the edge of my vision, and I look out the window (anything to distract me from actually writing). How lovely, the bird is back!

this is not quite how it happens. For one thing, in cultures that have a democratic ethos, relatively weak traditions, and a high receptivity to new technologies, everyone is inclined to be enthusiastic about technological change, believing that its benefits will eventually spread evenly among the entire population. Especially in the United States, where the lust for what is new has no bounds, do we find this childlike conviction most widely held. Indeed, in America, social change of any kind is rarely seen as resulting in winners and losers, a condition that stems in part from Americans' much-documented optimism. As for change brought on by technology, this native optimism is exploited by entrepreneurs, who work hard to infuse the population with a unity of improbable hope, for they know that it is economically unwise to reveal the price to be paid for technological change. One might say, then, that, if there is a conspiracy of any kind, it is that of a culture conspiring against itself.



stammering, destroys my life." Kafka asks himself if his life would be better if he no longer wrote, if he said no. But life then would be "wholly unbearable" and would have to "end in madness": "the existence of the writer is truly dependent upon his desk and if he wants to keep madness at bay he must never go far from his desk, he must hold on to it with his teeth."[1]

Sent In Simple Syrup

YASMEEN FAHMY

Lately there's been
a big small voice
in my made-new brain—
less gray matter—
thoughts slosh
and splatter
like zigzagging mulch
in the hot summer rain

The big small voice
has made herself at home
spread out, feet up,
wants lots, wrong cup,
and her sticky hands cling
to my "myself" clothes
bought to remember
how to savor, that I'm grown

I love the big small voice
so I don't know what to do
she's too close, too far,
too known, too new
and sticks to me like
pink-purple marmalade
dripping, gumming
scented pomade

The big small voice
will go for good one day
that I know, so I try
to welcome each foray
like a bright, hot fire
too close, too far,
sent in simple syrup
from a long-dark star

-182m

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Our faculty of attention affects us in countless ways. Our very perception of reality is tied closely to where we focus our attention. Only what we pay attention to seems real to us, whereas whatever we ignore—no matter how important it may be—seems to fade into insignificance. The American philosopher and pioneer of modern psychology William James summed up this point more than a century ago: "For the moment, what we attend to is reality."[1] Obviously, he wasn't suggesting that things become nonexistent when we ignore them; many things of which we are unaware exert powerful influences on our lives and the world as a whole. But by ignoring them, we are not including them in *our* reality. We do not really register them as existing at all.

Each of us chooses, by our ways of attending to things, the universe we inhabit and the people we encounter. But for most of us, this "choice" is unconscious, so it's not really a choice at all. When we think about who we are, we can't possibly remember all the things we've experienced, all the behaviors and qualities we have exhibited. What comes to mind when we ask "Who am I?" consists of those things we have been paying attention to over the years. The same goes for our impressions of other people. The reality that appears to us is not so much what's out there as it is those aspects of the world we have focused on.

"Roll call," said the Captain. A cord on his bag snapped, causing him to rotate slowly, helplessly. He reached out through the nylon netting and tried unsuccessfully to grab a knob on the wall.

"Here," said the Engineer.

"Here," said the Physicist.

"Here," said the Chemist.

"I'm here," said the Cyberneticist, holding his head.

"And here, that's six," said the Doctor.

"All present and accounted for. Congratulations." The Captain's voice was calm. "And the robots?" There was no reply.

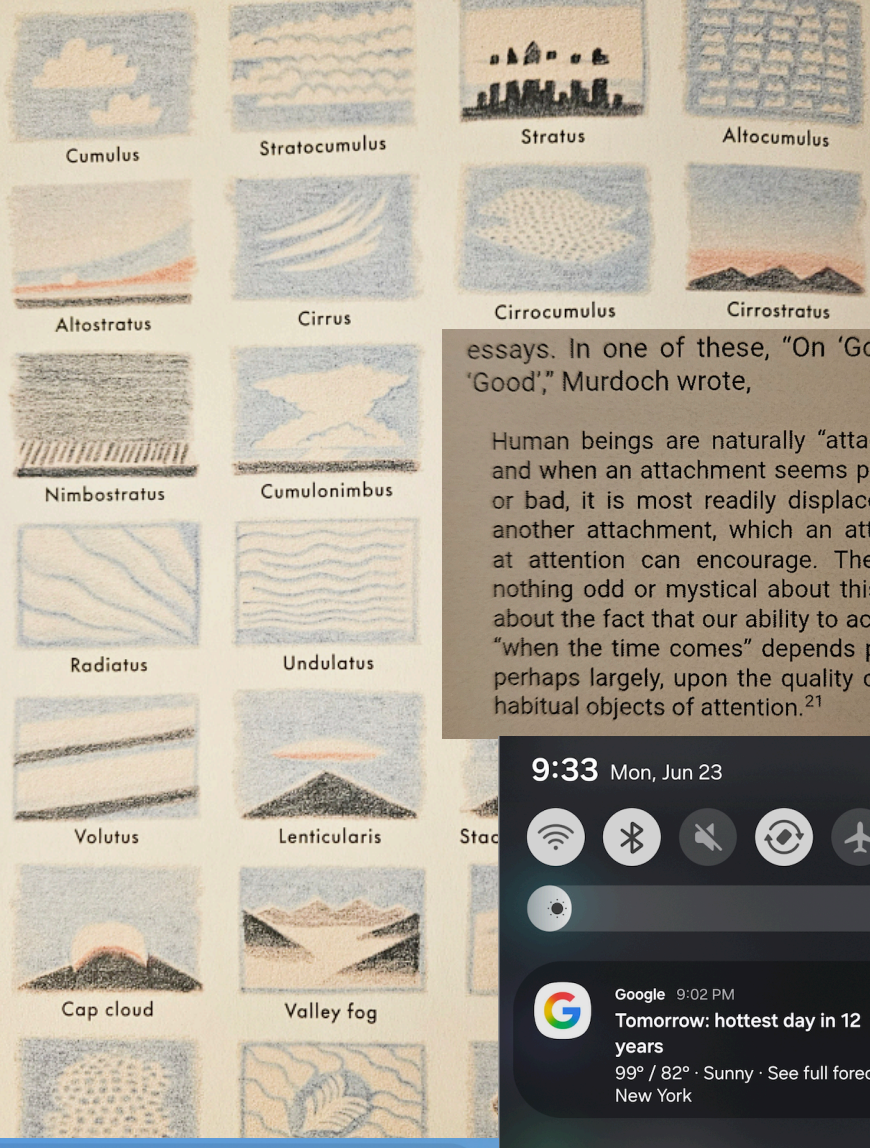
"Robots!!"

Silence. The lighter burned the Doctor's fingers; he put it out. "I always said we were made of better stuff."

results, savours, and

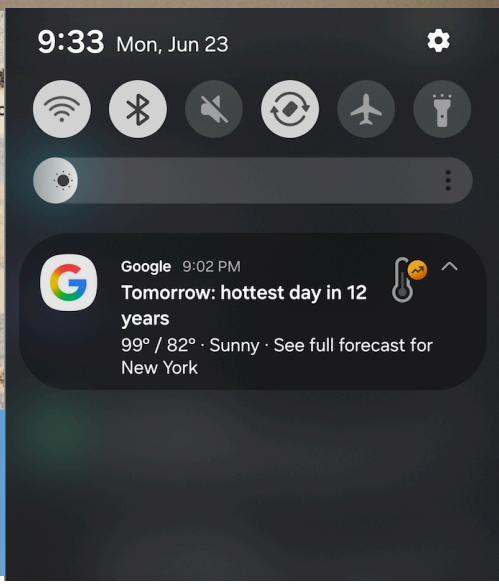
The principle of radio-brain-stimulation was soon developed much further. Programmes of all the most luscious or piquant experiences were broadcast in all countries, and could be picked up by simple receivers that were within the means of all save the pariahs. Thus even the labourer and the factory hand could have the pleasures of a banquet without expense and subsequent repletion, the delights of proficient dancing without the trouble of learning the art, the thrills of motor-racing without danger. In an ice-bound northern home he could bask on tropical beaches, and in the tropics indulge in winter sports.

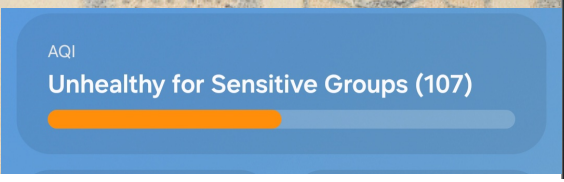
A Cloudspotter's Glossary



essays. In one of these, "On 'God' and 'Good'," Murdoch wrote,

> Human beings are naturally "attached" and when an attachment seems painful or bad, it is most readily displaced by another attachment, which an attempt at attention can encourage. There is nothing odd or mystical about this, nor about the fact that our ability to act well "when the time comes" depends partly, perhaps largely, upon the quality of our habitual objects of attention.[21]





RIFFUL VII

GWEN CULLEN

After my mother died, my siblings all wanted to talk. They didn't quite know what they wanted to talk *about*—only McKayla was focused explicitly on our mom, retelling the same stories, asking if I remembered things the same way while I hmmed along. My brothers would call me with a question about a recipe or how to remove a stain and linger on the phone, gun-shy of goodbyes. My older sister Monica schemed about getting our father to go to therapy, eat more fiber, play basketball with the other geriatrics at the Y. I started ducking all their calls, feeling like a shit. I just didn't want to talk. All I wanted to do was rewatch all seven seasons of *Rifful VII* on DVD.

*

Watch enough episodes of *Rifful VII* back-to-back and you'll start cursing in Tem'ian when you're frustrated. (And wondering why all the non-profanity spoken among the feline warrior race is English, even when they're alone.) You'll start finding their blue, hairless, lipless cohabitants on the planet Rifful VII oddly attractive. You'll have half a season where all you can see are the seams joining bald caps to foreheads, never meant for high def. You'll dream of the Tem'ian mage choirs and the Andullaii genetic monstrosities in their true haunting glory, never successfully translated from the original books to the 90s show. You'll slip your newspaper from its bag and, seeing the president, have a nanosecond of wondering who the fuck this is, usurping the authority of Earth Minister Malcolm Connors, with his salt-and-pepper pompadour and reliable season-climax mock Shakespearean soliloquies?

*

Will it surprise you to learn I was not super cool in high school? Not super cool and not super *well*. Something had gone wrong with my brain. A weird smear on the bus seat became miasmic poison that no amount of handwashing would cleanse, something I spread to all my clothes and the vegetables I chopped for my family's dinner. If I answered a question without focusing on really remembering my response, I'd become convinced it had been filled with vile obscenity. Going to parties was a comically unappealing prospect: there could be toxic drugs to track home, potential blackouts where I might do anything, life-ruining encounters with the police. I stayed home on Friday nights. My mom, usually so busy

with university events and her book groups, suddenly had a lot of time to watch *Rifful VII* with me.

"Oh, I love this show. Move over. Let your mother watch."

At some point, she'd have to go to sleep, and I'd stay up, alone in the finished basement, watching the tensions between the advanced, aquatic Andullaii and the violent, magical Tem'ians unfold, their eventual uneasy alliance upon the intrusion of desperate Earthlings.

Years later, gifted yellowed copies of the second and third novels for Christmas, their brittle covers held in place by packing tape, I asked my mother if she'd noticed I was struggling, if she'd been worried.

She laughed. "Extremely, Frances. Just…*so* worried. You don't do things by halves." She saw that even at a decade's remove, the notion that I'd upset her made me queasy. "I do love that show," she added. "Thank God it was that and not *Jersey Shore* you couldn't get enough of. Then you would've been on your own."

That night, as I had my whiskey and sugar cookies with McKayla, our tradition in the twinkling lights of the tree, my mother reappeared, glasses replacing her contacts, in her bathrobe.

"I shouldn't have said that," she said. "I would've watched *Jersey Shore* with you."

"Of course," I laughed. "I know, Ma."

"Good."

*

When a sibling from a group of Andullaii hatchlings dies, no matter where they are, their brothers and sisters go silent, then recite the almost-prayer of the Return to the Sea death poem. In season four, we learn (slightly against book canon), that this is true even when they've traveled the four and a half lightyears to Earth. The Andullaii are born in clutches of hundreds of fertilized eggs, never meeting their parents. Theirs is a society without romantic love, a concept of friendship so egalitarian as to verge on meaningless. The hatchling group is the most fundamental unit of connection.

*

I once asked my mother why she liked *Rifful VII* so much.

"It was so important to me as a young mother," she said.

"That is not the most common answer!"

She looked up from the chicken she was dressing. "Really?"

"Really. It's mostly 17-year-old boys who like it."

She shrugged. "I can see that. All the battles. To be fair, I did not have much luck getting your friends' moms to watch it. I did recommend it, though. Especially with the Tes'ian mothers, trying to get their sons crowned, but also with the Hatchlings and all that bloodline anxiety on Earth, I do think the books are *about* motherhood. What we should be doing for our kids, what we *can* do for them." She pushed her hair out of her face carefully with the back of her wrist. "Can you get me a lemon?" I got up and found the lemon in the crisper. "I might be making more of it than is there," she said. "It was the show that was on at 9 p.m. on Wednesdays and your father always came home on time on Wednesdays because he had to pick you all up from CCD. That was the time I got to myself. For that decade. I love you all, but I think there were entire years that went by in the late 90s when I didn't have *thoughts* that weren't about you kids or work."

She laughed, a laugh that was really just a series of small sighs, and crouched to feed the bird into the oven. My mother had a dense trimness she maintained with pilates and a slightly puritan approach to carbs. Her hair, greyed, was piled in a claw clip she'd had for years. She was still, I thought, very beautiful, in an unadorned, familiar kind of way.

*

I was the last one to realize our mom was dying. I knew she was sick, actually kept better track of the latest test results and appointments than my siblings did, but my brain wouldn't extrapolate the likely outcome. It was just a gauntlet of terrible trials—physical, bureaucratic, and emotional—that, once endured, would deliver us back to the way things were before. I visited often, but spent most the time quizzing her and my father on next steps. My mom was tired, distracted. I thought for a long time that it was awful that your energy and your focus all leave you so early in the process of dying. Then I realized they're still there, smoldering, but turned inward. My mom marshaled everything she had to get ready to die. It was too late when Monica stopped me, told me that it might be nice for my mom if the two of us could just sit.

I sat. I would try to talk to her about my day, my job, but conversation was just one dropped stitch after another. I felt so clever when I brought along my *Rifful VII* DVDs. My mother smiled when I pulled it from my bag, asked me to turn it down so she could shut her eyes. I heard the change in her breathing as she fell asleep. I let myself look, really look, at the reality of her hands, every bone and tendon and vein straining against

thinned skin. Up her skinny arms, her hollowed out neck, I could see things were dire. But her face was just her face to me, even then, even later, even embalmed. I knew the pillowcase it rested on, its beige scalloped edge. I knew the turns of the curls around her temples. Knew the green-blue light, catching her cheekbones, of the oceans of Rifful VII. I sat with her through the rest of the episode, the one after that, the one after that.

Recognizing my Mare

KATELYN MACKENZIE

I was riding along one day, easy and unburdened, when someone pointed out to me that I wasn't just riding—I was riding a horse. Attention suffused my form and extended to its outlines, where I noticed for the first time that it really was making exquisite contact with something equine. I sensed pressure, warmth, breathing and beating; I sensed my posture, entwined to rushing flank, back, and withers. For a moment I dreamt of falling. Forward.

This is how she arrived, the mare I came to know. Gone were those agonizing days of walking on my own, wounded. I'd ambled on foot through the passageway of finding her so that we could amble together. Riding, I could see her now: a chariot in chestnut; from crest to croup, me. She knew me too, and long before I knew her. In the ecstasy of mutual recognition, we ride together; we ride each other. Like a long-awaited wish of the horse, my mare, we are reunited in locomotion. Lateral-eyed, she sees what I cannot, bounding over obstacles together at a collected canter. She abides. I abandon worldly ways, stroking her whorl as I dismount.

Can worldly ways work their way back in?

I dream of being her foal and watching her gallop. I dream of being her foal and being groomed by her. Afterwards, I don't know how to approach her. She forgives this, dissolving my doubt anyway. We are air above the ground, her sweat my hypertonic, effortless effort.

Still, a long-familiar not-knowing enters—how to ride, what to do, how to care—the horse, with the horse, for the horse—and I am alone. Which came first, the horse or forgetting the horse? To be the winner at derby dash. Wondering but patient, my mare waits for me while I sleep. A night mare dark to my nightmares: first of suckling for milk, next of drinking her blood extending our rides, taking off with her tail hairs to learn to play the cello. The more vivid my imaginings, the less I see of my mare.

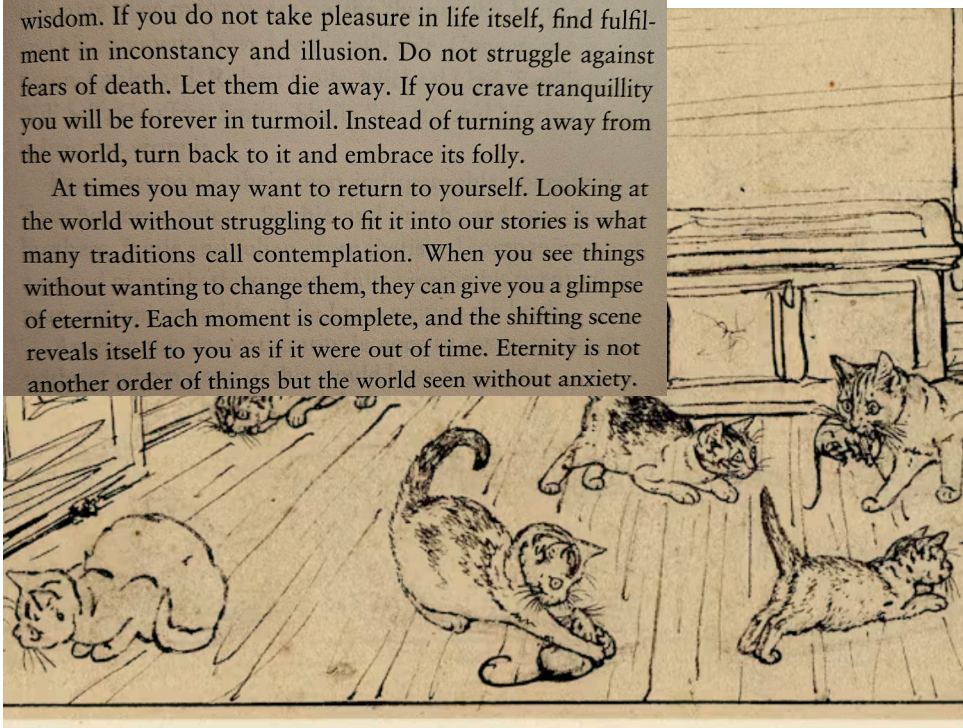
Do I stop riding her or seeing her first? That I can't recall, but I remember the unseeing. Bit by bit, she recedes, but not into shadows. More like she recedes into the background, just as this fitful and ancient separation from

her emerges in the foreground. Entirely out of view now, and still before my unseeing eyes, the horse kicks. A stable vice, railing against the outlines of its horse form dissolving. Eyes glistening, lucid, seeing unseen and starting to shimmer. The unknowing I unwitnessing something spectacular:

The horse color horse shape chromelike waves, all at once dematerializing. A horseful of water taking its space. Without outline to hold, it falls boisterously to the ground. I turn my still head to look, see nothing but sodden stable ground. A recent memory of the sound of water cascading. Unsound, a horse departed.

A feline philosopher would not encourage humans to seek wisdom. If you do not take pleasure in life itself, find fulfilment in inconstancy and illusion. Do not struggle against fears of death. Let them die away. If you crave tranquillity you will be forever in turmoil. Instead of turning away from the world, turn back to it and embrace its folly.

At times you may want to return to yourself. Looking at the world without struggling to fit it into our stories is what many traditions call contemplation. When you see things without wanting to change them, they can give you a glimpse of eternity. Each moment is complete, and the shifting scene reveals itself to you as if it were out of time. Eternity is not another order of things but the world seen without anxiety.



andrés maldonado

KaBUkICHō Live STReAM

MARIAH EPPES

Attention. Oh, it's
like a spotlight.

On a dark night.
In the dark street.

There are textures, almost
layers, in the dark. You slip
between. Wielding gaze.
You don't know
your own—well, it
doesn't matter. You slip
between, and then?

Attention. Oh, it's
okay. I'd wait forever.

【 LIVE 】東京都 新宿 歌舞伎町 24時間 ライブ / Tokyo Shinjuku

WHaT eVER HaPPeNED TO HeR?

googling past friends and roommates

JULIE KOCSIS

When people talk about how "opposites attract" it's usually in the context of romantic relationships, not friendships or familial relationships or any other sort of platonic paring that might exist throughout one's life. As a kid, I was very quiet and shy—something I've thankfully overcome as an adult. I hate to brag, but as my preschool teacher, Mrs. Wood, wrote about me in a report card that my mom recently unearthed, "Although she is rather quiet, she has made friends and gets along well with her classmates and enjoys playing with them." Tack that up on the fridge! When I was a kid a lot of the friends I made were very much my exact opposite—loud, bold, and attention-seeking. In elementary school I became best friends with Kelly. Though we somewhat physically resembled each other (teachers and other students regularly called me "Kelly" by accident), our personalities couldn't have been more different. While I was an only child living in a quiet home with a cat, Kelly had two younger, feral siblings and three galumphing golden retrievers running around their house. It was a state of chaos that fascinated me, but easily overwhelmed me during playdates and sleepovers.

As we grew up, though, we grew apart; the rift created by our opposing personalities was just too much to sustain any sort of close friendship. In high school, though we weren't friends anymore, we still had many classes together and therefore—to my great irritation—spent a lot of time in one another's presence. Her once bold and fun personality came to feel obnoxious and needy. She always had to shout out funny things in class and make crass jokes. *Couldn't she just shut up for two seconds?* I would wonder.

After high school, I lost complete track of her, but recently found her grandfather's obituary, learned her married last name, and discovered that she's now an attorney living in Charleston with a couple of kids. She's probably a completely different person now. She'd have to be, right? Or (leaning into the ugly stereotype of lawyers) maybe she's exactly the same?

Toward the end of high school I became friends with a girl named Stephanie. We had a bunch of classes together and similar interests in music and movies. Like Kelly, she too came from a very different family situation than I did; her parents were divorced and she lived with her grandmother, an extremely sweet and tolerant woman. At first, Stephanie

seemed normal and fun. We'd hang out at the mall together, pass notes in class, and loan each other books and DVDs. I met a few of her friends from other schools and I'd drive us all around town in my 2002 blue metallic Saturn.

Slowly she revealed to me that she could be bossy, sometimes asking (okay, instructing) me to drive her places like I was her chauffeur, and doing rude and cheap things like leaving a waitress mere pennies as a tip. I was a good girl! I didn't do shit like that! I'd laugh it off in the moment and then sometimes I'd sneak back and toss a couple extra bills on the table, embarrassed by the whole thing. She was also incredibly mouthy to her grandma and parents, openly mocking them to their faces, while they quietly took it.

Once she got comfortable with me, she started treating me the same way she treated her family. We were close friends (or frenemies, really) for about a year and a half in high school. We went to different colleges though and so I took the opportunity then to essentially "break up" with her in the same way someone would with a romantic partner, and we never spoke again (despite her attempts to contact me on every social media platform that exists). A few years ago, I learned that she had gotten married and through some quick Googling (again, you can learn a lot from obituaries!) found that she had been arrested for domestic battery. Someone who probably barely weighed 100 pounds had the cops called on her by her husband. As shocking as it was to see her mugshot with her mascara running down her face, it also made perfect sense. Then about six months ago, I Googled her again and found *four* new distinct mugshots of her, all DUIs from the last year. I knew that she had a kid now too, which made it all the more tragic.

After unearthing Stephanie's series of mugshots, I wondered who else from my past might produce interesting Google results. And, sure enough, the very next person I searched for turned up perhaps the craziest results of all.

During the spring semester of my sophomore year at a small Christian—way too Christian for me—college in western Michigan, I shared a dorm room with a girl named Sophie. After my original roommate dropped out for health reasons, Sophie was placed with me. She seemed nice enough in the beginning (they always do though, don't they?), but soon proved to be a massive narcissist and someone who wouldn't shut up about her amazing relationship with Jesus (think Mandy Moore's

character in *Saved*). She always seemed to be going through some sort of crisis too—complaining about professors and friends and family, the chaos and unfairness of everything inflicted upon her. Initially I tried sharing stories with her from my own day-to-day life, but she'd always just turn the topic back to herself.

Once we were no longer roommates, I lost touch with her; I don't think she liked me either, which was more than fine. Through the grapevine, I heard she dropped out of college, moved to Zambia to work as missionary, and then when she returned to the US, brought two little Zambian orphan girls back with her who she had adopted (as a single, white, 21-year-old). What I quickly found about her on Google though was that she was accused of munchausen by proxy and temporarily had her kids taken away from her. She claimed that the older daughter had a very rare, very serious ailment and had gone through hundreds of unnecessary medical procedures at prestigious children's hospitals, including having a feeding tube inserted. I came across several news articles and then an entire 10-episode season of a very well-researched investigative podcast called *Nobody Should Believe Me*. Again, I was shocked, but also not *that* shocked. In the podcast, I learned that during the time her children were taken away from her, the police obtained Sophie's old journals, in which she admits that she often lies to people about her own health, making up ailments for the attention. She eventually got her children back though; it's amazing how faulty the CPS system is and how helpful an expensive lawyer can be. I have no doubt in my mind that she's guilty as hell.

As for me, I learned a lot from these relationships. I'm happy to say that all my current close friends are not the attention-seeking type. They aren't rude or narcissistic, bossy or crass. They don't leave pennies for tips or drink and drive. They're thoughtful and genuinely good people who do not have police records. Thankfully, I can now identify and weed out lunatics from a mile away.

But sometimes, when I'm bored at work and need something to distract me for a few minutes, I'll do some light googling, because you never know what will come up. I wonder what Kelly and Stephanie and Sophie are finding out about me when they search online? What do they think about who I've become? Do they care? Or have they long forgotten me? Attention spans and memory can be pretty short these days.

TY FOR 5 issues!!!

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further reading:

"this is how meta AI staffers deemed more than 7 million books to have no 'economic value'" by keziah weir, *vanity fair*

recognizing my mother: an experiential song on the view by changkya rölpai dorjé, tr. thupten jinpa

image sources:

john singer sargent's watercolor scrapbook

"mare and foal," victor adam (lithograph, hand-colored)

"cats hunting in a mice-infested bedroom," gottfried mind (ca. 1783-1814)

"brig on the water," gustave le gray (1856)

exoplanet WASP-121b (artist's concept)

exoplanet GJ 9827d (artist's concept)

"a great titmouse (parus major) perched on a branch," pieter withoos (late 17th century)

text sources:

p. 3 / *the empty mirror* by jan van der wetering

p. 6 / *good entertainment* by byung chul han

p. 6 / *technopoly* by neil postman

p. 8 / *the attention revolution* by b. alan wallace

p. 8 / *star maker* by olaf stapledon

p. 8 / *eden* by stanislaw lem

p. 9 / *the women are up to something* by benjamin lipscomb

p. 9 / *cloudspotting for beginners* by gavin pretor-pinney & william grill

p. 16 / *feline philosophy* by john gray

how to print & bind this zine at home:

materials, programs, tools:

- 7 sheets of regular printer paper
- 3-4 new staples
- a pushpin, awl, or other tool to make a small hole
- adobe acrobat reader (free) or other PDF reader that can print in "booklet" mode
- optional: an x-acto knife, to trim the edges

instructions:

- open the zine PDF in acrobat. go to file > print. under "page sizing and handling," choose "booklet."
- the zine will appear to print in a jumbled-up way. take the sheets from the printer in exactly the order they were printed. if you fold the whole stack in half, you'll notice that the pages are in order. don't fold it yet, though!
- being careful to keep the sheets in order, fold each page individually (to get the best crease). you can use the blunt edge of a butter knife or a bone folder to crease it well.
- now we're going to create the holes, where we'll push in the staples to bind. you can be as precise as you like with this step; using a ruler to ensure that every staple is at an equal distance on every sheet, or just using the staples themselves as a measuring tool and eye-balling it. mark where the holes should go with a pencil. 3-4 staples along the crease should be enough.
- use a pushpin or awl to poke holes through each sheet. you can do this individually sheet-by-sheet, or use a binder clip to hold the sheets together and do them all at once.
- when all the holes are ready, align the holes of each sheet and press the staples through. feed the staples through the holes from the backs of the sheets, so that the prongs of the staple are on the inside of the crease. (the flat backs of the staples will be on the spine of your zine.)
- when staples are through all the sheets, use the blunt edge of a butter knife of a bone folder to fold down the prongs of each staple.
- fold the zine, and use the blunt edge on the spine crease a few times for good measure.
- optional: using a ruler and an x-acto knife, trim the uneven edges of the booklet.